

# THE *Music* JOURNAL

*Music* JOURNAL  
MAY-JUNE 1949

DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF MUSIC IN AMERICA



IN THIS ISSUE

MAY-JUNE 1949

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**CONTENTS**

DUANE H. HASKELL	The American String Teachers Association.....	5
OTTOKAR CADEK	String Intonation in Theory and Practice.....	6
LEWIS POTTER	The Strings Return.....	9
EMANUEL WISHNOW	More Interest in Strings.....	10
ERNEST E. HARRIS	Judging String Quality.....	11
WILFRED C. BAIN	String Quartet on a University Campus.....	13
GEORGE POINAR	Artist's Stake in ASTA.....	14
JOHN LEWIS	New Horizons for Strings.....	15
EDGAR S. BORUP	Strings Must Be Fun.....	17
SAMUEL SORIN and JAMES de la FUENTE	Doing It the Hard Way.....	18

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## IN THIS ISSUE

NOT LONG ago we heard the comment, "There has been enough writing and talking about the scarcity of string players. It is high time to *do something* about it." That, of course, is true in the same sense that there is a never-ending stream of writing and talking about the necessity for better concepts of citizenship, more intelligent health and safety habits, improved skills in written and spoken English, and greater devotion to religion. The individuals and organizations who are concerned with the functioning of church, school, and society in general are always writing and talking about their problems.

The "string problem" has been with us for a long time. It is not new. But it has come into sharper focus recently because it has finally reached the higher professional levels. Symphony orchestra conductors and personnel managers have begun to feel the pinch of the shortage of competent string players and to complain that music educators have been falling down on their jobs. In the music columns of the *New York Times* there has been extended discussion recently concerning the small string-playing population, with implication that the string problem might be traced to the nature of the scoring done by composers in recent years. It is not quite that simple. There are basic responsibilities that have been neglected further down the line.

It is surprising to find that many music educators take little more than a detached and fatalistic attitude toward the shortage of string players and the consequent deterioration of school and college orchestras. All too often they are inclined to duck the issue completely and take an "I don't know what we can do about it" attitude. They have been able to get by with this for some years because other activities in

the music education program—particularly bands and choral groups—have held the stage with a degree of brilliance that distracted attention from the orchestra. In other words, a band that could be more quickly and easily brought to a high level of performance has enabled instrumental instructors to achieve eminence for their departments and themselves, even though they were at the same time letting their orchestras die a not too slow death.

American education has always moved in cycles. Fashions in the teaching of reading, grammar, handwriting, and other subjects come, go, and return with much the same regularity as clothes fashions do. Formal instruction in grammar, for instance, gives way to the learning of grammar through context, and just as sure as the seasons come around, formal grammar is eventually reinstated. Perhaps music educators have been going through a "band cycle" and will now begin to make strings "fashionable."

What has caused the severe decrease in the number of string pupils? Many reasons have been advanced—the length of time and the amount of work which the string pupil must invest in order to achieve comparable competence and satisfaction as compared with the wind-instrument pupil; the lack of glamor attached to string instruments and string players; the absence of commercial promotion of string instruments; the inadequacy of most music educators as string performers and teachers; the lack of enthusiasm and effort for an adequate string program on the part of music educators. Take your choice and add your own reasons.

Much of this reasoning is rationalization, or better yet, just plain alibi. There are effective string-teaching programs in this country—programs that enroll substantial

numbers of pupils, pupils with interest and enthusiasm who turn in just as good performances as do the wind players in their communities. There are school systems with no shortages of strings. We have visited them, seen their classes in action, and heard their orchestras play with fully-manned string sections. These school systems and their surrounding communities are no different from the ones without strings, except for one thing—they have someone who really believes that the "string problem" is a mental block and that plenty of good string players can be developed if there is a teacher with sufficient skill and abundant enthusiasm.

It is gratifying to *The Music Journal* to devote this issue to the subject of strings, with a series of articles provided through the cooperation of the American String Teachers Association, including several papers delivered by ASTA members at the joint meeting of their association with the Music Teachers National Association in Chicago in December, 1948.

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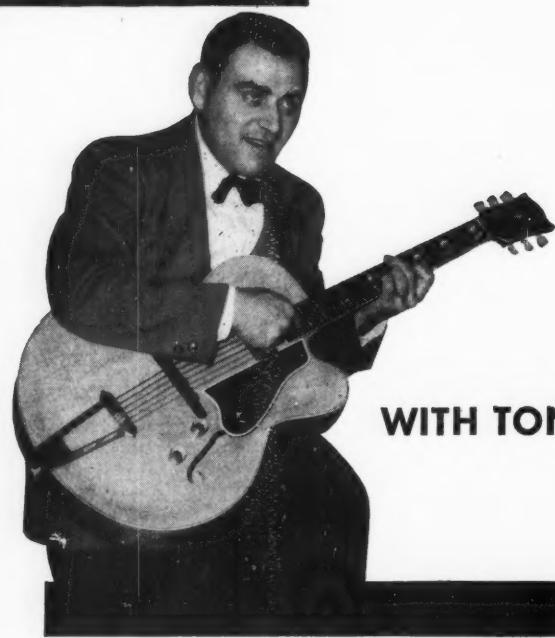
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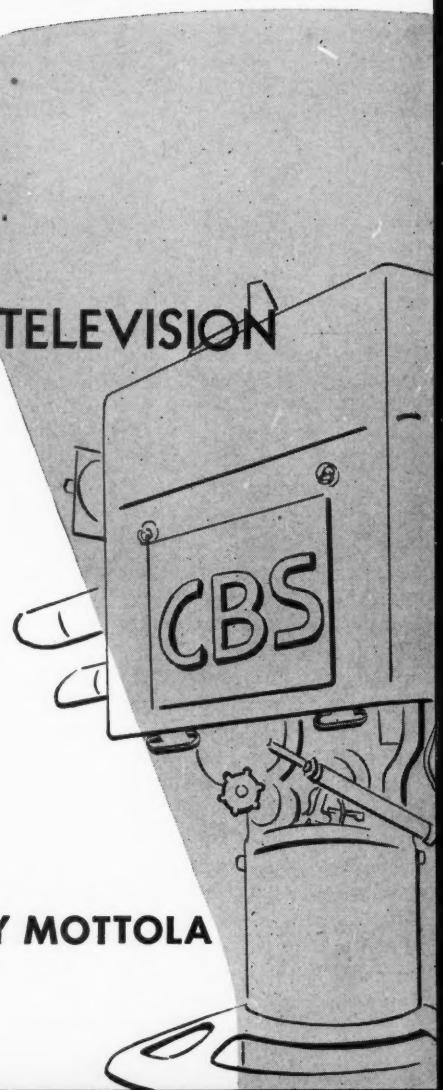
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# THE MUSIC JOURNAL

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## The American String Teachers Association

DUANE H. HASKELL

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The President of ASTA outlines the purposes and plans of his organization and looks hopefully but objectively upon the expansion of string teaching.

---



THE formation of the American String Teachers Association came in response to an urgent need. This urgent need was expressed so unanimously by music educators all over the country that the question might be asked why such an organization had not been set up before 1946. A brief review of the string situation in this country between the first and second world wars will answer that question.

Instrumental music received little attention in the public schools until after the first world war. The teaching of stringed instruments remained largely in the hands of private teachers or teachers in conservatories. A wide gulf separated the philosophy and objectives of conventional string teaching and the educational and social objectives of music in the public schools. Studying violin meant pursuing the technical and musical traditions of a European culture, and its only possible objective was a career as a performing virtuoso, membership in a symphony orchestra (and in this connection it should be kept in mind that symphony orchestra managers and conductors were reluctant to consider young American performers unless they had had extensive training and experience in Eu-

rope), or a job in a theater orchestra. The value of music as an avocation was not seriously considered, and the string player who did not seriously pursue a career was placed in the category of one who had a hobby which the average citizen never quite understood. Certainly, the last thing in the world a student who was struggling with a violin or cello would consider would be a career of teaching in the public schools.

### New Development

The history of instrumental music in our public schools is relatively short as compared with that of vocal music in the schools. Regardless of what the future may unfold, there will never be anything else so amazing as the phenomenal expansion of instrumental music in the schools between 1920 and 1940. The increase in school bands in this period was numbered in the thousands. In the early twenties the number of school orchestras increased greatly, but by the early thirties they began to expire, while no diminution was observed in the wind band growth. The strings seemed headed for extinction as far as the American public schools were concerned.

It is not the purpose of this article to review the arguments so often advanced and prejudices that have so often been exhibited when the relative values of strings and winds are being considered. It is important, however, that a few facts be set forth objectively. The band in the public schools was a 100 per cent American phenomenon because it utilized our genius for mass production technology. Band instruments of the finest quality were turned out on a production line basis, and the teaching of these instruments was on the same scale. Such a thing had never happened before. Group teaching of instruments, especially strings, had been introduced in the Boston schools more than a decade before by Dr. A. G. Mitchell, but only a few schools in other cities had shown any interest. Curiously enough, the band movement explored to the fullest the possibilities of this pedagogical procedure which had been intended for strings. The string teachers during this period were strangely apathetic or downright hostile. This attitude on the part of string teachers is not hard to understand when one keeps in mind the source of string traditions and beliefs in the days preceding the

(Continued on page 27)

# String Intonation in Theory and Practice

OTTOKAR CADEK

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Mr. Cadek, member of the music faculty of the University of Alabama, presents an authoritative summary of viewpoints concerning intonation in string playing.

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BECAUSE of a natural tendency to catalog things, we are likely to think of string players in two groupings—those who know nothing of theory but play beautifully in tune, and those who analyze and know the reasons for everything but play atrociously. I do not believe that it is essential to know the scientific theories concerning pitch in order to play in tune, but I know that there is a great deal of confusion in popular terminology which may lead some teachers and students astray. In ASTA we have an opportunity to remove some of the mystery which seems to surround the subject, and to disseminate correct theories and terminology. In my opinion the level of artistic performance in this country has never before been as high as it is today, and general technical principles are being taught and enunciated with great clarity. My concern is with the apparent contradictions I have found in the theories and practice of string intonation.

In my student days I was instructed (by a pupil of Flesch and Thibaud) to play sharps high, flats low; major Thirds<sup>1</sup> and Sixths enlarged, minor Thirds and Sixths contracted; and the leading tone very high. When Sevcik heard me play a few years later, he remarked, "You don't exaggerate your intervals enough."

<sup>1</sup> The names of intervals and scale steps, such as Semitone, Tone, Third, Fifth, etc., are capitalized in this article to avoid confusion with other meanings of the same words.

Most of the instruction I received concerned individual notes—"higher" or "lower"—with never a word about the principles involved. In discussing intonation with artists and teachers, I have found that a singular vagueness and mystery surround the subject. One artist, celebrated for his intonation, simply says he tries to play so that it sounds like the piano. Another seemed to rely purely on intuition and observation of harmonic tendencies. A third tried to take each interval in its smoothest form, which necessitated constant adjusting with the open strings.

I have heard it said that the violin, being capable of any pitch within its range, is played by artists in just (sometimes called natural, or pure) intonation, in contrast to the equally tempered piano. The piano scale is frequently described as faulty, or a compromise. Other systems of intonation are rarely mentioned.

## Limited Approach

Numerous articles and books on violin playing that I have had opportunity to read stress the importance of playing in tune, but rarely give any specific instructions as to tempering, or the reasons therefor. A few exceptions I will discuss later. Siegfried Eberhardt [6] goes into detail regarding physical movements, but leaves the ear to find its own way. Auer [1] writes of the importance of close Semitones, but gives

no clue as to how close they should be, in comparison with the piano, for instance.

When I devoted myself exclusively to string quartet playing for a number of years, I found that the tempering which had puzzled me in my student days was an extremely important factor in promoting good resonance. Still I was not satisfied. I wanted to know why this tempering was necessary, and whether there was a scientific basis for so doing. And I wanted to simplify the problem for the student if possible. A keen ear, I discovered, was not sufficient to insure dependable intonation unless the ear knew what to listen for.

To my mind, the question resolves itself into this: Do well-trained musicians who play stringed instruments endeavor to use the intervals of the just, the equally tempered, or some other system of intonation?

To discuss this problem intelligently it will be necessary to refer to certain scientific data, which I shall summarize briefly. First, let us examine four methods of determining tuning of intervals.

The just scale is based on a theoretical system of comparatively recent date, as it was not until the beginning of the sixteenth century, Helmholtz [11] says, "that the law governing the motions of strings became known, and it was found that the simple ratios of the length of the strings belonged to the musical intervals of the tones of all instruments." The beautiful simplicity of the ratios of this scale is widely recognized.<sup>2</sup> It should be remembered,

however, that this scale contains whole tones of two sizes, and Semitones which are slightly larger than half the greater whole Tone. On account of this peculiarity, the notes of one scale are not fitted to be the notes of another. Actually, it would take 117 pitches within the compass of one Octave to play in all keys of this theoretically ideal system, although 53 pitches within the Octave are considered to give a fair approximation. Also, the Fifth between the Second and Sixth scale steps is contracted to the point of being unfit for harmony. For these reasons the scale has never been in general use as a method of tuning instruments of fixed pitch, although its major Thirds and Sixths are smoother than those of any other system.

Taking the three other systems in historical order, we come first to the Pythagorean. The notes of this system may be found by starting at any given point—say G-flat—and proceeding along a series of perfect Fifths until we come to F-sharp, which will be higher than G-flat by the small interval called the "Comma of Pythagoras," which has a value of 23.5 cents,<sup>2</sup> or less than one quarter of a Semitone. All sharps are similarly higher than the corresponding flats, while in the just system the opposite is the case. The major scale formed from these notes compares with the just scale as follows: it has whole Tones of only one size, identical with the greater whole Tone of the just scale; it has Semitones about one fifth smaller than those of the just; the Second, Fourth, and Fifth scale steps are identical with the just; the Third, Sixth, and Seventh steps are considerably sharpened.

The Pythagorean system was used in the Greek tetrachords, which were the basis for our modern scales. It was used almost exclusively until the sixteenth century, when it was largely superseded by the meantone system, which prevailed all over Europe and England for several

<sup>2</sup>The ratios of the frequencies (in the major scale) of adjacent notes from the tonic are 9/8, 10/9, 16/15, 9/8, 10/9, 9/8, and 16/15; and the ratios of successive notes in the scale to the tonic are 9/8, 5/4, 4/3, 3/2, 5/3, 15/8, and 2/1.

<sup>3</sup>Cents are hundredths of an equal Semitone, a valuable system of measuring musical intervals, in which the octave has 1200 cents.

centuries. In this method of tuning, the major Thirds are assumed to be perfect as in the just, which, however, produces contracted Fifths and enlarged Semitones. As in the Pythagorean, the sharps and flats are differentiated, but in the opposite manner; that is, sharps are lower than flats. It sounds well in harmony, which accounts for its use in tuning organs and concertinas until the middle of the nineteenth century. When limited to twelve notes, however, it is also restricted in practical use to keys having no more than three sharps or two flats, and it was therefore supplanted gradually by equal temperament. The fact that the sharps and flats in the meantone and Pythagorean systems were not identical accounts for the apparently absurd synonymy in modern musical notation of two symbols for the same sound. [Helmholtz, 11, p. 438]

### Equal Temperament

Equal temperament, which has been accepted as the best method of tuning instruments of fixed pitch, such as the piano, simply divides the Octave into twelve equal Semitones. The Octave then remains the only truly consonant interval, since all other intervals are tempered in comparison with the just scale. The tempering of the Second, Fourth, and Fifth Steps is very slight; however the Third, Sixth, and Seventh steps are sharpened, but not as much as in the Pythagorean. According to Helmholtz [11], since the tone of a piano diminishes rapidly, the imperfections of equal temperament are less marked than on any instrument with sustained tones.

To summarize, the meantone system imitates the just by taking the major Third in its smoothest form, but has contracted Fifths and enlarged Semitones, while the Pythagorean

is closer to equal temperament in its enlarged major Thirds, but has perfect Fifths and contracted Semitones.

The vast amount of experimental investigation available should be of value in considering our problem. This includes studies of: (1) pitch recognition; (2) the threshold of pitch discrimination (or a point at which a difference in pitch becomes perceptible); (3) the relative consonance or fusion of simultaneously produced tones; (4) the vibrato in voice and instrument; and in addition, actual objective analyses of violin intonation as performed by artists. All of these bear on the question of the capacity of the human ear to distinguish between systems of intonation.

Taking up the first point, we find that the many investigations on the subject of so-called absolute pitch may be summarized by the results of experiments by Petran [17], who states that "there is no gifted group of people who have a perfect absolute pitch, that is, who can tune a tone variator exactly and invariably to 440 from memory alone . . . With even the most expert . . . a given note is not associated with one point in the pitch series and that point only, but rather with a small range." Actually the tests, as well as the definition of absolute pitch, vary so greatly that one may only say with confidence that a keen ear is a primary requisite of musical talent.

Regarding the second point, the threshold of pitch discrimination has been found to vary with the pitch level as well as with the individual. It should be noted that the pitch range of the violin<sup>4</sup> lies in the middle register, where perception is keenest. Here the Semitone is more than twenty times as large as the smallest discernible pitch difference. However, Schoen [20] states, ". . . experimental results show that any one of two tones of an interval can be changed in pitch up to a certain point without changing the interval." Furthermore, ". . . the quarter Tone is the smallest pitch difference between two tones that can be perceived regularly as an interval and not as a mere change in the same

Because of space limitations it is necessary to postpone the publication of the fourth installment of Mrs. Helen M. Thompson's series of articles, "The Community Orchestra—Its Establishment and Development" until the next issue of *The Music Journal*.

<sup>4</sup>From 198 frequencies (g) to 2640 (c'') is the normal range.

(Continued on page 37)

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## The Strings Return

LEWIS POTTER

STRINGS are returning, but much remains to be done in our schools regarding string promotion and improvement. In many localities where strings have been nonexistent for years no more definite action has yet been taken than local "irritation" concerning the problem—important though this preliminary step may be. However, most writing on the subject of strings up to the present has been negative. Being continually reminded how bad things are aggravates a situation which is actually improving. Below are some indications and evidence based on my own observations of this improvement wherein strings and string teaching are being revitalized and re-established on a firmer basis.

The first is new teaching techniques. While it is true that there have been contradictory technical approaches to the teaching of strings, this has in a way been healthy, for it has resulted in an exploring of techniques, an experimentation, a sifting of ideas, out of which some definite trends have been established. Among these are the development of the string class and class methods of teaching strings, which corresponds to the regular school class and therefore fits into the public school situation. Another technique has been the development of a more melodic approach to the teaching of strings. This has brought forth materials for teaching which avoid the older, "étude" approach; which provide musical excursions in the realm of



ensemble playing at elementary stages; and which shift to other positions earlier, to mention some of the more notable changes in approach.

Another factor in the improving string scene is the fact that the success of the string class, when correctly organized and taught, has proved that learning the strings, for all ordinary purposes, is no more difficult than learning the wood-winds. Much of this success, moreover, can be attributed to the incorporation into the string and orchestra field of some of the techniques which helped the band program achieve the success it has.

A third indication of the improving string situation is the increasing attention being given to string and orchestral preparation in the teacher-training institutions. Here is the really crucial element in the promotion of stringed instrument training programs and orchestras in the public schools. Prospective teachers must be better trained than at present in the stringed instruments and

Mr. Potter, a cellist and composer

of note, is a member of the music faculty of the University of Illinois.

He offers evidence that the string situation is really improving.

in orchestral and small ensemble literature, and must have full realization and appreciation of the true functions of music in the educational process and the importance of the strings and orchestra in such a program. While there is much to be done in this regard in our teacher-training institutions, definite improvements have been made in many localities. To cite one example of such curriculum adjustment close to my own experience, at the University of Illinois provision is being made for an increase in the music education curriculum from two semesters in the teacher-training string class to four semesters for non-string players, plus another year of private applied study on a stringed instrument for music education majors on an elective basis. Courses in pedagogy in the various branches of applied music are being provided for students in the regular Bachelor of Music curriculum, and the study of the principal applied music subject for the music education major is being spread over the whole four years, rather than compressed into the first two years as was formerly done. Of course this increased time for string training in the curriculum is but one side of the picture. On the other side is the fact that a critical need exists for a re-examination of our approaches to the teacher-training program with regard to strings, and to our materials used in this training. Already ASTA

(Continued on page 29)



## More Interest in Strings

EMANUEL WISHNOW

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An optimistic view of developments in the field of string instruction is taken by the author, who is a member of the music faculty of the University of Nebraska.

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OPTIMISM is necessary if one is devoted to the promotion and stimulation of stringed instrument teaching and performing. It is needed if we are to counteract the general attitude which is so often reflected in the "reasons" given for the retarding of the string movement in our schools and colleges. These "reasons" are: The growth of the band movement and its public appeal, the overwhelming amount of publicity and number of commercial campaigns for selling band instruments and uniforms, the lack of professional opportunity for the services of string players, the need for strong and purposeful organizations to direct and foster string promotion, the lack of standardization of instruments so as to insure adequate equipment for students, the need for curricula to insure teachers of stringed instruments who are well prepared, and finally the general neglect of the whole teaching field in the matter of salaries and working conditions.

In order to achieve any basis for optimism for the string situation, it will be necessary to offer some observations and facts to refute partially, if not entirely, these well-worn reasons which have been advanced to explain the constriction of the movement toward a healthier music picture.

The instrumental literature of unquestioned significance is and was orchestral. We need hold no brief for the musical worth of the music of the great masters. The significant music that is being written today by our esteemed contemporaries all

over the world is preëminently orchestral. Commercial radio of the "chain" variety abounds in "specials," that is, the highly ornamented arrangement with the string family an important addition. Symphonic and chamber music, while not heard as much on the radio as many of us think they should be, are an established part of the fare. These are mentioned in order to emphasize the uses of the strings professionally. Our latest addition to broadcasting — television — should help tremendously in that children and adults will be able to see what they have been hearing for years — the numerous programs with the string families well represented. As a matter of fact, it can be fairly said that radio today has the greatest difficulty in selling a concert band commercially. The service bands are heard and enjoyed by many, but these are of the "sustaining" program variety. The point that we are attempting to make is that even though the band movement has virtually reached its zenith in the schools insofar as numbers engaged are concerned, the professional concert band is rarely heard on radio or on records.

### Indications

In further discussing the first "reason" for the retarding of the string program in our schools (the growth of the band movement and the continuing lack of interest in string playing), it may be helpful to show what is being done in Nebraska communities. In a survey prepared by

Grant Mathews of Scottsbluff Junior College, 60 senior high schools out of 81 that were questioned taught instrumental music which included orchestra as well as band. Some of these schools offer string class work in the elementary and junior high schools. This can be interpreted as a sign that in Nebraska the Class A and B schools (graded according to size of enrollment) are maintaining orchestras and string instrumental programs. It is doubtless true that in other states the proportion will be as high and probably higher. In the same survey it was pointed out that 91.4 per cent of our senior high schools, 70 per cent of our junior high schools, and 55.5 per cent of the elementary schools have bands. It might be argued conversely that if this is any indication of the national situation it would seem that the saturation point for the band program is nearly achieved. The forward-looking instrumentalist will encourage the promotion of string instruction and performance as an amplification of a well-rounded instrumental program. The criticism is not implied that we are lacking in conscientious instrumental supervisors, but rather that many school instrumental teachers follow the line of least resistance and maintain that the "public doesn't demand it" as a ready excuse.

Regarding further the growth of the band movement in the schools, it would seem that the development has been country-wide and that for the most part the band program is thoroughly established. There is no

(Continued on page 35)

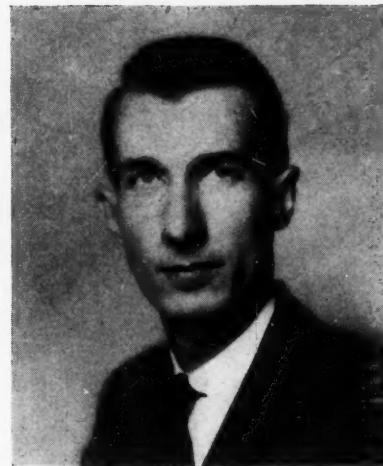
# Judging String Quality

ERNEST E. HARRIS

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Dr. Harris, member of the music faculty, Teachers College, Columbia University, presents the results of an intriguing test relating to tone quality of stringed instruments.

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A PROGRAM of experimentation is under way that may throw light on (a) the manner in which musicians judge tone quality of violins, (b) the validity of this judgment, (c) the relationship of preferences for tone quality to physical characteristics of violins, (d) the extent to which musicians agree in their judgment of tone quality, (e) the extent to which inexpensive violins can be improved through certain kinds of adjustments, and (f) the judgment of violinists compared with that of other musicians, and a comparison of their judgment with that of non-musicians. In addition to revealing the influence of the human imagination in the judgment of tone quality as related to violins, the results of this work will undoubtedly stimulate new attitudes toward the dollar and cents value of stringed instruments.

Excellent progress has been made toward a better understanding of the acoustical properties of musical instruments. On the one hand we have scientists who are able to tell us a great deal about the physical makeup of tones and the ramifications of change that take place as loud and soft or high and low sounds are produced. They explain that the type of instrument, the performer, and the acoustical properties of the room influence tones that are produced. While work in this field is far from complete, nevertheless the scientists have already provided much accurate information about the physical structure of musical tones. On the other hand, another group of people are con-

stantly working on the psychology of hearing. In many respects the manner in which human beings perceive sounds, especially musical tones, presents an even more complicated type of study than does a straightforward analysis of tone. Although musicians have not utilized, as yet, much of the valuable information made available by psychologists and scientists regarding the phenomena of aural perception, they are greatly indebted to them.

## Limited Objectivity

While physicists and psychologists have made remarkable strides in the fields of sound and hearing, the musicians, in general, have fallen far behind. The serious musician has been content with existing opinions and his own "personal experience" regarding music as an art and a science. He can boast of very little progress toward a better understanding of those phases of music with which he is constantly associated. It is true that the evaluation or measurement of many aspects of any human experience which are of an aesthetic nature cannot be adequately described. On the other hand, musicians are sometimes guilty of making serious statements, claims, and criticisms, as well as large expenditures of money for instruments, without substantial basis. Unquestionably there is a great need for study and research in addition to that being conducted in the fields of physical science and psychology. It is hoped that when completed, these tests concerning the judgment of

tone quality of violins will contribute something in this direction.

With regard to tone quality the serious musician appreciates, to a limited extent, developments in the science of sound and the psychology of hearing. He is of the opinion that his art, which is a tonal art, carries with it a special kind of "sensing" or "feeling" for tone quality. This is apparent in various statements and claims made concerning the tones of different violins. That a special formula for varnish developed by a certain Italian violin-maker is responsible for a certain warmth of tone quality is typical of the opinions held by many violinists, violin-makers, and teachers. The aging of woods, the measurements of the instrument, the thickness and graduation of thicknesses of the various parts of the violin are all considered to be factors of great import. Furthermore, before buying an instrument, most violinists insist upon knowing something of the history of the instrument and its maker, and upon proof of its authenticity.

A wide range of professional violinists and advanced students pay from \$3000 to \$5000 for a violin. The concert artists, in most cases, pay much more. Upon learning that a student is using a violin which falls in the \$100 to \$300 bracket, many teachers of the artist class do not hesitate to inform the individual that the finest kind of tone quality will never be possible without the benefit of a much better instrument. The typical school-type of violin, ranging in price from \$15 to \$80, is

(Continued on page 29)

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# String Quartet on a University Campus

WILFRED C. BAIN

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An account of the activities of a string quartet in residence, as written by the Dean of the School of Fine Arts of Indiana University.

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DURING the summer of 1948 the Board of Trustees of Indiana University appointed to faculty status the Berkshire Quartet, a professional string quartet of national reputation. The appointment of this group placed the University in a special category of the very few institutions who have employed as a unit a professional string quartet in residence. Perhaps fewer than half a dozen universities and colleges in America have brought to their campuses such units. Many institutions of higher education have string quartets that are composed of faculty members, and while such faculty quartets are perhaps not as widely recognized professionally, their functioning may be no less effective.

The purpose of this article is to acquaint the musical and educational public with a pattern which yields musical, educational results that are far-reaching and valuable.

It is generally agreed in musical circles that chamber music is a medium through which composers of all time have presented to posterity some of their loftiest flights of musical composition. Because of the uniformly high quality of composition for chamber music groups, music students and the musical populace have a unique opportunity to become acquainted with one of the brightest facets of the musical art. It is generally agreed that in the whole field of music listening there is no better opportunity to experience the musical art than through listening to excellent chamber music performed with high intellectual, musical, and technical fidelity.

One of the principal values that accrues to any educational situation



that can make use of the services of a professional quartet in residence is the opportunity to hear good musicians present the finest music under intimate circumstances. Our student body this year will enjoy not less than eight formal concerts on the campus by the Berkshire Quartet. The freshmen of this year, after hearing four years of chamber music concerts, will have at their graduation the equivalent of a course in string quartets. Not only because they will have an opportunity to listen to great chamber music but also because the content of each of the chamber music concerts is discussed in the classes in music literature, these students enjoy a unique privilege. In this way the student comes to a professional concert already acquainted with the music he is to hear.

Probably one of the most valuable assets accruing from having a professional quartet in residence is that the students have a first-class instruc-

tional opportunity in the field of chamber-music playing. Having on the faculty a group of men whose primary interest is in small ensemble, generates enthusiasm for one of the highest forms of music.

Participation in a fine student symphony is excellent experience indeed. If one is a member of the first violin section of the symphony, however, he has fifteen to twenty other students with whom to compete or behind whom to hide in case of technical musical inefficiency. But if one plays in a small chamber-music group, each player represents an individual part. Then and only then will the student player be actually on his own. In other words, playing chamber music becomes solo playing in ensembles. This means that the individual student has complete responsibility for carrying his part.

Having a professional quartet in residence provides the finest kind of instruction and guidance in ensemble performance for the educational situation, since the members of the quartet spend part of their time teaching and coaching. When we sponsor high school clinics and conferences, we have an immediately available source of genuine authority. Formerly, such artists were totally removed from colleges and high schools except as performing artists. Now the students in the universities and colleges can have regular contact with these artists, and the high school students in their festivals and clinics can occasionally become acquainted with them. It used to be that the average high school student rarely heard music of

(Continued on page 22) ...



## Artists' Stake in ASTA

GEORGE POINAR

The author, a member of the faculty of Baldwin-Wallace Conservatory, reminds us that the interested *listener* is important to the development of strings.

EVERY year or two a talented young string artist makes a brilliant New York debut. The criticisms vary from appreciative applause to glowing praise. The new artist's success is understandable because he worked hard for the previous fifteen years or so. He studied with the best teachers in this country and abroad (usually on scholarship) and he had for his use one of the best instruments (usually loaned) available in this country.

But, after his initial and successful launching in New York City and metropolitan area concerts, the young artist realizes that the real lasting test is about to begin. Can he get enough yearly engagements to make his fame—and his expenses?

For this test he must leave behind him the vicious but necessary metropolitan launching board and literally become a pioneer. He must blaze a trail through the wilderness in search of the tribes which are the most cultured, the most receptive, and the most generous. He must pass by the numerous small country towns where the violin is only a piece of wood with sheep gut stretched over it ready for the horse's tail to sweep across it. He must push on in search of the artist's necessary complement—an audience which likes music enough to pay for it.

Where can he find such a place outside of the well-established, well-organized metropolitan areas which will, at best, merely furnish him with passports by writing printable words known as reviews? Where can he peddle and sell his musical recitals? Obviously, only in those communities where there is at least one

enthusiastic music salesman, or, at best, a purposefully organized association of musicians.

There are three stages of musical development in a community which can furnish a market for the concert artist. The first market can be created when there is musical interest on the part of one or two members of some local group such as Rotary or Kiwanis Club, church, or chamber of commerce. These musically-minded members can arouse enough interest in the community to try a concert as a civic, social, and cultural venture. This is the opportunity for which the comparatively unknown young artist has been waiting. And, if the artist succeeds in impressing his audience, this is the cue for which the community has been waiting. It may well be the beginning of a regular concert series.

### Continued Success

The success of the initial enterprise usually brings forth in a community much hidden local musical talent, and eventually there comes the desire to perform music as well as to import it. An ambitious musician, encouraged by the local response, forms and conducts a small symphony. This marks the beginning of the second stage of musical development and serves as an additional market for artist appearances. The local conductor can make progress with the collaboration of string teachers as first chair people who can train their own sections (probably made up largely of their own students).

It is here that the artist enters

again, in a guest appearance with a civic symphony. The arrangement is mutually satisfactory. For the artist, it is another ambition realized. But, more important, it furnishes each orchestra member with a necessary artistic inspiration. It kindles a musical fire in each member. This fire may, and can, be carried away to another community where it can blaze out into new music groups and, eventually, it is hoped, into another small symphony. This is an ideal market for the concert artist.

The third and final stage of musical development is again fostered by such organizations as ASTA. Where a specific local musical group has flourished long enough and is powerful enough, a school or conservatory is often established, thus setting up another good market to which the artist might sell his wares.

Such a school of music is private at first, but may in time affiliate with a local or nearby college or university. This association of musical culture with the culture of the other arts and sciences makes a fertile field for the artist-teacher. Special master classes, with the artist as teacher and recitalist, are rapidly becoming an important instructive part of a well-rounded education for both string student and artist. The cooperation of teachers, students, and visiting artist makes possible an increased interest in the part which each one might have in a community, or the state, or the country.

It is logical to assume that the near future will see the culmination of what is now in the process of being formed: the American School

(Continued on page 19)

# New Horizons for Strings

JOHN LEWIS

Significant examples of strings in successful action are highlighted by the director of the Department of Music, Texas State College for Women.



A SIGNIFICANT development long awaited by music educators is becoming evident in the increased activity and higher level of attainment in string teaching in this country. For more than a decade the instrumental teachers in the United States have been aware of and deplored the lack of string players, especially in the public schools and colleges, where the band has enjoyed phenomenal development. Since 1930 the contrast in the growth of these two spheres of instrumental music teaching has become increasingly sharp.

Music education in this country received a tremendous impetus from the band movement in the twenties, and for several years thereafter the development of string teaching paralleled this growth, but soon it was out-distanced by the band. The depression of the thirties brought the complete failure of the string program in comparison with other instrumental development. Music leaders all over the nation, challenged by this situation, began making plans to rebuild this field of music. The Second World War interrupted these plans and at the end of the war most phases of our instrumental teaching were in a weakened condition.

Again music leaders set their minds to planning a new solution to old problems, with the result that interest is now widespread. Many aspects of instrumental music have regained their prewar standards, and there is a greater concentration on string teaching than ever before. The growing emphasis upon string playing promises to raise the general

level of music education in this country as the bands did in 1920. In all parts of the country there is evidence of definite action in revitalizing, re-establishing, and reorganizing string teaching on a more stable basis than in the past.

Foremost among the organizations fostering this outstanding development in string playing is the American String Teachers Association, which was founded under the leadership of Duane H. Haskell in 1946. Its purposes are to support and encourage better and more frequent performance of the literature for strings, including solo, ensemble, and orchestra music at all levels of achievement, and to establish the highest artistic and pedagogical standards in stringed instrument teaching. Since its recent beginning a great deal of action has been planned and carried out to bring these purposes to the knowledge of teachers and administrators.

As evidence of the awakening interest in the string program a number of states have organized state units of ASTA, and are finding answers to their particular problems. Outstanding among these are Iowa, Illinois, Texas, Wisconsin, and California.

## Examples

Mr. Wesley E. Woodson, Jr., chairman of the California-Western unit of ASTA at San Diego, reports that the group meets one night a month for clinical demonstrations of playing and teaching. Other activities include string recitals, the review of new music, and the publication of a

monthly bulletin. Besides these accomplishments, plans are being activated to organize an ensemble to perform compositions of local composers, and to form playing groups to demonstrate stringed instruments in various schools, thereby building up more interest. In addition, the unit is carrying out a campaign to procure discarded instruments which it will repair and place at the disposal of the public schools.

From Milwaukee comes news of plans for demonstrations and experiments to be followed by a string festival. Led by Sister M. Moraleen, chairman, the Milwaukee unit of ASTA has discussed means of attaining higher standards for teaching and performance, and methods for extending solo and ensemble repertoire.

The Indiana State Division of ASTA, under the leadership of Robert Hargreaves, is concentrating its energies on a series of string clinics which, so far, have been held on the campus of Ball State Teachers College at Muncie. All string teachers in the area have received literature concerning the project, and it is expected that improvement in teaching techniques will result from the program.

Mrs. Marjorie Keller of Dallas is the driving force for the Texas Division of ASTA. Her work in organizing and teaching strings in the Dallas Public Schools is a splendid example for all who have the opportunity to visit her schools. A special event in the Dallas schedule is the program on which Mrs. Keller's grade school string pupils play with

(Continued on page 32)

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## Strings Must Be Fun

EDGAR S. BORUP

A FEW days ago I indulged in the great American pastime of new-car-looking. Although I made myself as inconspicuous as possible, because I can't afford the latest version of Old Dobbin, I was nevertheless accosted by an eager salesman. After explaining that I was a musician "just looking around" (and watching the light in his eye die a sudden death), I took a deep breath and began asking questions about the car. Evidently he hadn't much faith in my ability to do business with him, because I couldn't bring him back to the car. "A musician, eh? Waddya play?" Hoping to relieve the pressure, I informed him that I was a string man—primarily a violinist. It must have been the right answer, for he looked at me closely and said, "Violinist, eh? That's the hardest instrument to play, isn't it?" And it wasn't a question he was asking either, only looking to me for confirmation of his statement. For a brief moment my chest swelled a bit, then I realized that in my pride I was guilty of a cardinal sin—that of perpetuating the myth of difficulty, the myth that has all but killed the string movement in this country.

Until recently among the most poorly organized groups in the country, the string teachers are nevertheless guilty of the most consistently poor public relations effort on record. Knowingly or unknowingly, they have fostered the public's belief in the tremendous dif-



ficulties associated with string accomplishment, and have taken refuge behind membership in that elite but fast diminishing organization, The Society for Those Who Have Finally Managed to Play That Most Difficult of All Difficult Instruments. True, there's value in distinction, but not when it leads to extinction.

A few years ago it was "Rubinoff and his violin"; now it is "Evelyn and her magic violin." Note that in both cases the instrument gets equal billing. The name of Stradivarius holds so much magic that it need only be mentioned to conjure up in the public's mind visions of thousand dollar bills, and to bring forth that deep-throated "Ah" that signifies a brush with the omnipotent. Through unwise propaganda the violin has been made a mythical instrument to most laymen. It is a \$50,000 treasure that everyone hopes to find in his attic, but which no one thinks of playing. It is an instrument of great appeal but with

Mr. Borup is a newly-appointed aide of the American Music Conference, and much of his time and effort will be devoted to the furtherance of the string cause.

few practitioners, of familiar shape but with few owners. For the public, it is the instrument of the élite, both difficult and expensive. Rubinoff's press campaign netted him a tidy income by firmly impressing the public with the rigors of his practice routine, one which left little time for eating and sleeping, judging from the hours he allegedly spent at it. Coupled with his fabulous instrument, it produced perfection—so the papers said. There is no doubt that the publicity campaign he conducted was successful from his point of view, but it merely solidified the public's desire to enjoy this magic from afar in the role of an admiring bystander. Ask a devotee of Ellington or Armstrong what make of instrument either of these men plays, or how much he practices daily, and you'll find that those factors aren't even thought of. Through careful publicity the stimulus received from these men is easily translated into action in the shape of amateur bands weak in training and talent, but strong on enthusiasm and hope. Moreover, the whole process of striving is fun.

Until the string program enjoys that sort of popular acceptance, until it too is a program of fun down on the grass-roots level, string teachers will be forced to continue the wearisome hunt for students.

Our cause is not hopeless by any means, however. Great advances have been made in the science of

(Continued on page 33)

# Doing It the Hard Way

SAMUEL SORIN and JAMES de la FUENTE

An enthusiastic pair of young artists tell an interesting story of concert touring in the old-fashioned barnstorming manner.

WHEN we came back from the war, we were faced by a unique situation—or at least so it seemed to us. While in the service, we had been out of artistic circulation for about three years, although both of us had had a certain number of concert tours under the auspices of the Army. Still it was fairly apparent that although we might have increased our artistic stature by giving concerts in such "in-the-news" places as Guam and Wake, we had added nothing whatsoever to our box-office value as far as civilians in the United States were concerned, and we discovered that we were very much the forgotten men. Other young artists had been given a three-year start on us, and they had made the most of their opportunities. Managers would say, in effect, "Oh yes, I seem to remember you, but where have you been for so long? It will be very difficult to get you started again."

Of course, and fortunately, there were many cities where each of us had intimate contacts and a certain following, and so we did not starve to death as we had enough concerts to keep us going. But we had hoped for more than that when we resumed our careers after we were demobilized.

Although we had been very good friends while we were taking graduate courses at the Juilliard School of Music, and our wives were also good friends there, for some reason we did not run into each other for quite awhile after we returned to New York at the end of the war, but when we did we immediately made arrangements to get together for an evening of bridge. These social re-



unions continued for a period of months, and one night we decided that we would play some sonatas together instead of bridge. Now you may have heard some tales about a man's wife being his severest critic, but our wives, even though in a sense they are our artistic competitors (Mrs. Sorin being a professional pianist, and Mrs. de la Fuente a concert violinist), were enthusiastic about our sonata work.

From that night on there was less bridge and more music, until we suddenly became aware of the fact that our careers, which had always seemed parallel, had in reality converged.

The only question in our minds was whether managers would take more interest in us as a team, or whether they would look on us as double-trouble. We decided that we would not even consult them, but would see what we could do as our own managers. Accordingly, we pooled our resources, our contacts,

and the amount of managerial work to be done.

Digging up the names of everyone we could possibly remember, private individuals, clubs, associations, charitable organizations, and churches, we sent a form letter to the effect that we had organized Cooperative Concerts, with the following idea. We agreed to do all of the advance publicity, supply programs, and so forth, and take a certain per cent of the profits as our fee. The sponsors of the concert would provide the hall, and have the remaining profits to donate to whatever charity or cause they saw fit.

The response was overwhelming, and we found ourselves booked for a coast-to-coast tour. Our programs were designed to give the audiences what they wanted, namely, half of the program of ensemble works, such as sonatas and other compositions written especially as piano and violin duets, and one group which presented each of us as soloist.

We would be the last to contend that the tour was always handled the way a professional manager would have done it. In one town we arrived on a Sunday morning, and were to play at the church in the afternoon. As we drove by on our way from the station, we saw to our amusement that we were billed on the bulletin board in front of the church. The announcement read as follows:

10:30 A.M.: WHAT JESUS PRAYED FOR  
3:30 P.M.: SORIN AND DE LA FUENTE

Once we booked two concerts without allowing for the train communication between the towns. We were helped out of this dilemma by

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One result of this tour which was entirely unexpected to us was that, as we had arranged all the concerts through various contacts which we already had, and local charities benefited from our performances in every instance, we became more than mere passing artists to our audiences, who took a genuine personal interest in us. Thus it was not surprising that requests were forthcoming for return engagements this season, and as we were playing in many towns and cities in which there were organized concert series, managements began to hear about the team of Sorin and de la Fuente. Instead of trying to force ourselves upon them in their offices in New York, we had demonstrated to them in their own field of activity that we were an attraction that they could use.

It is the old story of private enterprise standing up to corporations and proving that there is a market for the product it is selling. We are now under management, having abandoned our Cooperative Concerts, and life seems very uncomplicated. But our advice to all young artists who have difficulty getting a start is: go out and do it yourself. It's the hard way, but it works.

### POINAR

(Continued from page 14)

of Violin Teaching. There are already many young artists who have had their entire training in this country. With the growth of activity on the part of string teachers everywhere; with the advances made in the past few years by civic musical groups; with the artist acting as inspirational colleague, an American School is the next step.

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## BAIN

(Continued from page 18)

this kind, and certainly only a very few met and talked with such artists.

The Berkshire Quartet has made itself available to any of the high schools of Indiana. It not only plays a recital for the high school students, but many times attends their orchestra rehearsals, sitting in with them and giving them excellent suggestions as to how their own music should be played. In addition, these artist teachers work with clinical procedures at the various sections of the high school orchestras throughout the state while on tours of high schools. In this way they give high school students an opportunity to see the possibilities of playing their music in an expert fashion.

Members of the Quartet attend two rehearsals a week with the symphony orchestra, which is under the direction of Ernst Hoffman, former conductor of the Houston, Texas Symphony Orchestra. The members of the Quartet are responsible for the playing efficiency of the various string sections of the orchestra, and the opportunity which the players in the orchestra have of sitting beside first-class performers for a rehearsal or two a week has a salutary effect upon student playing. The Quartet does not play all concerts with the orchestra, for it is thought wise that the students should at times be on their own, and while the Quartet does contribute a great deal to the composite string tone of the orchestra, yet the purpose is not merely to populate the orchestra. Essentially the situation is educational and should remain so.

Having the Berkshire Quartet here and other quartets at other universities has extended music beyond Carnegie Hall and Town Hall to the people throughout our land.

There are a great many frustrated, underpaid, unhappy musicians in large cities who would welcome the opportunity of moving out from musically overpopulated areas. Many of these artists can adapt themselves in a surprising manner to the educational and artistic traditions of smaller communities. It is true that some of them may be foreign-trained artists, but the major-

ity are American-born and American-trained.

The crying need in musical America today is for more and better string players. We will have no more than we now have unless we train more, and it is a strong conviction that having a professional quartet in residence or a faculty string quartet will do much to indoctrinate prospective American teachers in the opportunities for musical satisfaction in the study of string performance and literature.

### HARRIS

(Continued from page 11)

usually considered inferior in many respects, especially with regard to tone quality.

It should be mentioned at this point that the so-called "antique" value of violins has not been discounted. It is true that the cost value placed on some instruments exists largely for its promise as a financial investment or worth as a museum piece. Strangely enough, most performing violinists state that they purchased their instrument (regardless of price) more for its quality of tone and general responsiveness than because of its antique or historical value.

I hesitate to reveal a body of findings that may present a serious challenge to generally accepted theories and opinions held by many outstanding performers, teachers, violin-makers, and other so-called authorities. The fear in this case is not of criticism but rather of the possibility that the reader might be sufficiently steeped in traditional opinion in the matter of violin tones, especially as related to particular kinds of instruments, that he might refuse to free his thinking to the point that the findings could be viewed constructively for what they might be worth. It should be made clear that the findings which are presented here pertaining to the judgment of violin tone are not based in any way on the personal opinion of any individual, including the writer, but instead are typical of the pattern of opinions emerging from a series of experiments conducted over a period of several years.

Since the tests have not been com-

pleted, it is not feasible to attempt any conclusion at this time. On the basis of experiments completed thus far, however, it can be said that rather definite information will evolve concerning all six points stated in the opening paragraph. The results may prove to be not only interesting but possibly shocking to some.

To acquaint the reader with the type of experiments that are being conducted and studied, the results of one test will be given here. While

other tests which have been completed vary in certain details, the over-all results shown in this test are to a large degree typical of the others. The test described here is only one of several kinds of experiments which are being conducted. The purpose of this particular test was to study the extent to which musicians agree regarding tone quality.

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C Piccolo	2nd Bb Cornet
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2nd C Flute	1st and 2nd Horns in F
1st and 2nd Oboes	3rd and 4th Horns in F
1st and 2nd Bassoons	1st and 2nd Eb Altos
Eb Clarinet	3rd and 4th Eb Altos
Solo or 1st Bb Clarinet	1st and 2nd Trombones
2nd Bb Clarinet	(bass clef)
3rd Bb Clarinet	1st and 2nd Trombones
Eb Alto Clarinet	(treble clef)
Bb Bass Clarinet	3rd Trombone (bass clef)
Bb Soprano Saxophone	3rd Trombone (treble clef)
1st Eb Alto Saxophone	Baritone (bass clef)
2nd Eb Alto Saxophone	Baritone (treble clef)
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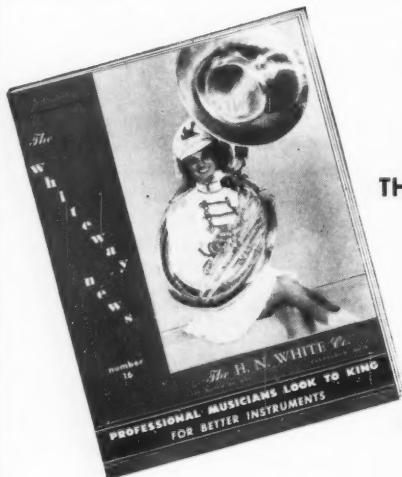
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mately 26 by 40 feet in size. Of these musicians, eight were good professional violinists. In order that the subjects could listen to the violins without the interference of any partition or screen, the performer stood just behind them. The audience agreed that the audibility of the instruments from this position was quite satisfactory.

To provide variety of tone quality, three instruments varying widely in value were used. A detailed description of the three violins will be given later. The performer was a top-flight professional violinist. He had been given the three violins in advance so that he could become equally acquainted with all of them. He was not permitted to use his own instrument. The three instruments were played as nearly alike as was humanly possible. The validity of this particular test, however, did not hinge on that factor.

Each test consisted of the performance of a complete musical phrase of sufficient duration to permit the listener to form an opinion as to the tone quality of that instrument at that time. The fifteen tests were divided into three parts. In the first five, the phrase played utilized only the A and D strings. The next five tests made use of a phrase limited to the E and A strings. The final five tests were performed on the D and G strings. (Tests which make use of phrases utilizing all four strings have also been made in other experiments.)

No description of the violins was given to the listeners until after the tests were over. They knew, of course, that different instruments were to be used. The subjects were given rating sheets on which they could record their judgments. They were asked to rate their opinion regarding tone quality as A, B, or C. Definitions for these ratings were as follows:

A rating of A indicates "I consider this to be superior tone quality. It is the kind of quality one might expect from the finest of violins."

A rating of B indicates "I consider this tone quality good. It is definitely better than one might expect from a so-called 'cheap instrument yet it is not what I consider to be exceptionally fine.'"

A rating of C indicates "I consider this tone quality poor. It is the kind of quality one might expect from a very cheap violin."

The results of this particular test are shown in the table below.

That trained musicians are not in agreement with respect to the evaluation of tone quality is clear from the results of this test. From the standpoint of agreement as to whether a violin tone is highly acceptable or poor, it would appear that the judgment of non-violinist musicians is as reliable as that of professional violinists. In Test 2, for example, twelve of the non-violinists rated the tone quality "superior," eight rated it "good," and four rated it "poor." In the same test, four of the professional violinists rated the quality "superior," one rated it "good," and three rated it "poor." In Test 5, one half of the professional violinists considered the tone quality "superior—such as one might expect from a very fine instrument," and the remaining half considered the quality "poor—such as one might expect from a very cheap instrument." It is of interest to note that in Test 5 the instrument used was a brand new fifteen-dollar violin. (However, certain adjustments which will be described later were made in this instrument.)

In the face of results of this kind the reader may be influenced to reach certain conclusions too quickly. In the first place, the fact that musicians are not in complete agreement as to the acceptability of the quality of a tone is not evidence that they cannot distinguish between superior and inferior quality. Perhaps they can, as individuals, distinguish between good and poor tone quality *according to their individual interpretation of quality*. Is it not quite possible, for example, that the presence of a certain amount of brilliance, sometimes referred to as "life," in a tone might appeal very much to one musician, while the absence of brilliance might, for another, constitute what he considers a desirable feature? Experiments are now being planned which will explore this possibility. The extent to which an individual musician is consistent in his judgment of tone quality is, of course, one of the determining factors. The present test is not valid in this respect because there is no way of knowing whether the inconsistencies

were due to lack of ability to evaluate tone quality or whether the performances varied enough to mislead the listener. Future testing for this particular study will have to rely on mechanical performances that can be duplicated without change.

One of the most interesting phases of this experiment is the comparison of the instrument used in each test with the results shown. Before doing this, however, each of the three instruments will be described.

One of the violins used in this test was an original Storioni (1766), which is valued at from \$4000 to \$4500. While musicians do not all agree as to the quality of a Storioni, nevertheless, this particular instru-

ment is a very fine one and it certainly should be considered far superior in every respect to the other two instruments which were used. The second violin was what would normally be considered a good student instrument. It, too, was an old instrument and cost its owner \$350. The third violin was a brand new one taken from the stockroom of a downtown store. To this instrument was attached a price tag of \$15.

The \$15 violin was exactly what one might expect in terms of its construction. It was of very heavy wood which was poorly seasoned. It was covered with a thick rosin-based varnish, and poorly fitted. Since one of the purposes of this test was to

(Continued on next page)

Table I	Total Number Non-violinists			Total Number Violinists			Combined Totals		
	"A"	"B"	"C"	"A"	"B"	"C"	"A"	"B"	"C"
1	4	13	7	1	5	2	5	18	9
2	12	8	4	4	1	3	16	9	7
3	5	4	15	0	4	4	5	8	19
4	11	8	5	3	5	0	14	13	5
5	10	3	11	4	0	4	14	3	15
6	5	10	9	1	5	2	6	15	11
7	13	10	1	5	?	1	18	12	2
8	8	5	11	0	3	5	8	8	16
9	7	7	10	0	3	5	7	10	15
10	9	9	6	2	4	2	11	13	8
11	9	11	4	1	5	2	10	16	6
12	8	9	7	2	1	5	10	10	12
13	10	7	7	4	4	0	14	11	7
14	8	10	6	1	5	2	9	15	8
15	6	4	14	0	0	8	6	4	22

*Note: Each of the fifteen tests must be reviewed individually. While it is interesting to compare the tests with one another, such results cannot be considered valid. The reason for this is the well-established fact that a human being cannot repeat his performances in exactly the same way. By examining the opinions of the musicians concerning each individual performance, however, highly significant results can be obtained.*

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- Chapter IV MODERN CHORAL DEVICES
- Chapter V CHORUS OF MIXED VOICES
- Chapter VI CHORUS OF TREBLE VOICES
- Chapter VII CHORUS OF MALE VOICES
- Chapter VIII THE ACCOMPANIMENT
- Chapter IX THE TEXT
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study the relationship of judgments pertaining to tone quality to instruments of varying values, it seemed only fair that the cheaper instrument should have the same advantages with regard to strings, workable pegs, properly regulated sound-post, and a well-fitted bridge and fingerboard as the other instruments. No other alterations or adjustments were made to the basic instrument. That is, there was no graduating of wood, changing of bass-bar, or other major change that would affect the tone quality.

From the definition given earlier, one would normally assume that a rating of A would suggest the tone quality of an instrument such as the Storioni. By the same token, it would seem that a rating of C would imply an instrument such as the \$15 violin. To test this assumption, the reader will find it interesting to take a pencil and encircle the appropriate figures in each test. If the Storioni was played, encircle the figure under A in all three categories. If the \$350 violin was used, encircle the figure under B in all three categories. If the \$15 instrument was played, encircle the figure under C in all categories.

In Test 1 the \$350 violin was played. (Encircle the figure 13 under "Non-violinists," the figure 5 under "Violinists," and the figure 18 under "Combined Totals.")

In Test 2 the \$350 violin was played again. Note the tremendous change of opinion.

In Test 3 the Storioni was used. When one considers the professional background of the subjects, the tremendous contrast of instruments with respect to value, the results of this particular test are no less than astonishing. One would normally think that poor performance at this point may have been responsible for this result. It must be remembered, however, that the listeners themselves expressed the opinion that, as far as they could judge, the performer executed the phrase exactly alike in each test, with the exception of Test 15.

In Test 4 the \$350 instrument was used.

In Test 5 the \$15 violin was played. The important observation here is not so much that half of the listeners rated the tone of the inexpensive violin as "superior," but rather the fact that both non-violinists and violinists were equally divided as to whether the tone quality was superior or inferior. Of the fifteen tests in this experiment, this particular one is the most interesting.

In Test 6 the Storioni was played.

In Test 7 the \$350 violin was played.

In Test 8 the \$15 violin was played.

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In Test 9 the \$15 violin was again played.

In Test 10 the Storioni was played.

In Test 11 the Storioni was again played.

Compare the results of Tests 8 and 9, in which the \$15 instrument was used consecutively and Tests 10 and 11, in which the Storioni was used consecutively. Regardless of the listeners' opinion of the tone, if two consecutive tests made use of the same instrument, the listener recognized the resemblance and recorded a similar rating. On the other hand, if one or more other instruments were played in the meantime, there was much less consistency in individual ratings.

In Test 12 the \$350 instrument was played.

In Test 13 the Storioni was played.

In Test 14 the \$350 instrument was played.

In Test 15 the \$15 violin was played. In this test the performer made a slight mistake, which undoubtedly influenced the ratings. This was the only test in which a mishap of any kind occurred.

While many interesting observations could be revealed concerning the ratings by the individuals taking the tests, only one will be cited. This person is recognized as one who knows a great deal about the manufacture of violins. He contends strongly that the kind of varnish on a violin has much to do with tone quality. He is positive that a fine violin maker, or performer, can detect the "muffled" or "woody" sound that comes from violins which are covered with the type of varnish usually found on inexpensive violins. On three tests in which the \$15 instrument was played, this individual rated the tone quality "superior" once "good" twice. This incident, of course, actually proves nothing. Merely a point of interest!

There are many factors to be considered in the evaluation of a violin. The two principal ones are concerned with *tone quality* throughout the entire playing range, and general *responsiveness*. The manner in which an instrument responds to various technical requirements is just as important to the performer as the quality of tone. In spite of the results revealed in this particular test, the reader must bear in mind that this test did not consider in any way the problems of responsiveness, and from the standpoint of comparing tone qualities of the three violins used, the results are only suggestive and offer nothing conclusive. This test does reveal one significant fact, however—that when listening

to the same performance under identical conditions, musicians are in very little agreement as to tone quality.

## HASKELL

(Continued from page 5)

twenties. The average teacher then would have told you, "There is only one way to teach the violin and that is the way it is taught in such and such a conservatory in Germany or perhaps France or Austria, and, regardless of the method, be it German, Belgian, French, or Russian, it certainly cannot be done in groups." There might be room for discussion of the relative merits of the several schools, but there was absolutely no uncertainty in the matter of class instruction as compared with private. Thus, it was inevitable that at the very time the school band movement was being welcomed with tremendous enthusiasm by the students in our public schools, the orchestra, which must depend upon the strings as its backbone, was receiving only apathetic or negative support from the string teachers, the very ones who should have been promoting their field with vigor. It was the old story of conservatism and reaction failing to sense the changing social function of music.

As time passed, a few music educators became gravely concerned over the ultimate fate of the stringed instruments. Numerous discussions and conferences were held. Endless argument too often descended to the level of acrimony. The band directors and instrument manufacturers were bitterly accused of having dictatorial ambitions; many felt that the school orchestra did not serve as good a social purpose as the band; all shades of heated opinion were to be heard. We can sincerely hope that much of this emotionalism has spent itself and that a cooler and more objective attitude has taken its place.

In summary, a few facts which are sometimes overlooked should be considered. Heading the list is the fact that the inherent possibilities of the stringed instruments in our public schools had not been discredited but simply ignored except by a few progressive teachers and music educators. At the same time, the col-

leges and universities were becoming aware of the stake that they had in the public school orchestras and string classes. The dearth of string players for the first time affected even higher levels, the professional schools and conservatories, and they too became aware that they had a great stake in the public school string program. Added to this was the fact that symphony orchestras were being forced to turn more and more to American-trained string players. With the situation becoming steadily more alarming, conductors and managers began to wonder out loud and in print just where the string players were to come from. The economic and political history of our country has been greatly influenced by the slogan, "Something ought to be done." Certainly this little trademark of Americana was overworked during these trying decades. The greatest problem seemed to be *what* to do. The answer was simple enough: get the string teachers to work together for the purpose of putting their house in order.

The founders of the American String Teachers Association were conscious that the first objective of the organization must be to bring together all levels of string teaching: college, university, conservatory, private, public school. The tremendous gap between the professional private teacher in the conservatories, colleges, and universities on the one hand, and the public school string teacher on the other must be bridged. The new organization must promote a program which would merit approval from an artistic and pedagogical point of view while encompassing the social objectives of the public school point of view. Since the criticism had been so often made that string standards had either been lowered or disregarded by class teachers, the highest of artistic and pedagogical standards must be demanded of all members of the organization. During the preceding two decades of argument the prestige of string teachers, particularly in the public schools, had been lowered, with an accompanying loss of morale. By the process of reverting to high standards and, at the same time, showing that the string teachers as a group were one of the most highly trained corps to be

found in American education, the lost prestige and morale could be restored. Finally, the new organization must promote a philosophy of balance in the instrumental music curriculum. Music education cannot be called balanced when stringed instruments are ignored.

In 1946, at the Music Teachers National Association meeting in Detroit, a committee was appointed to explore the possibilities of a string teachers organization. Later that same year, in cooperation with a

similar committee set up within the Music Educators National Conference, a provisional organization was established for the purpose of creating the structure of a permanent string teachers association. This provisional organization christened itself the American String Teachers Association and, in 1947, the formal founding of the present organization took place at the MTNA Meeting in St. Louis. Since that time the membership has grown until forty-three states are now represented.

Since ASTA resulted from the joint efforts of string teachers from both MTNA and MENC, it has continued to work cooperatively with both organizations and, in this effort, it has received the friendly support of both. In addition, ASTA is a member of the National Music Council.

The Constitution of ASTA provides for membership on an individual basis. However, groups of string teachers may set up subsidiary organizations within the Association on either a state-wide or a regional basis. This latter feature has proved to be a very happy situation and, at the present time, state units are organized in California, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Wisconsin. Additional state units are in the formative stage.

#### General Objective

The general objective of ASTA is to support and encourage better and more frequent performance of the literature for strings, including music for solo, ensemble, and orchestra at all levels of achievement, and to establish and maintain the highest artistic and pedagogical standards in string teaching. This general objective is being realized in the following ways:

1. By sponsoring research and study of all phases of string playing and teaching.
2. By promoting the highest standards in string teaching and pedagogy.
3. By promoting the study of stringed instruments, particularly at the elementary, secondary, and college levels of American schools and in private studios.
4. By promoting the highest standards in string playing and performance.
5. By encouraging the composition, arrangement, and publication of representative string music.
6. By demonstrating and publicizing the personal and social values accruing from the performance of string music.
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### POTTER

(Continued from page 9)

is initiating important steps in this direction.

A fourth indication of improvement in the string situation is the present status of the school band itself, which has in recent years attained supremacy in the school music program. While the band will and should remain a part of the well-balanced school music program, it seems now to have reached some sort of limit—to have run the gamut of its resources musically and as a showpiece—and is no longer the novelty it once was. This fact is being more fully realized by thoughtful musicians and school administrators. An increasing number of school administrators are coming to realize that music has a place in the school program, not because of its showmanship, its utility, or its value as training in teamwork, but because of its aesthetic and educational value. Music is one subject which, if rightly taught, not only develops in the learner a critical appreciation of beauty but stimulates thought and the ability to discriminate between that which is beautiful and fine and that which is only cheap and showy. And the cultivation of taste is surely an important part of the educational process. The school educational program, therefore, must recognize and promote music as an important element in the cultural life of the community, and not use it merely to exploit the talents of the students for advertising, promoting athletic events, and other such activities.

The limitations and shortcomings of the school instrumental music program which is built entirely around the band are becoming more apparent as former students realize after graduation that they were more exploited than educated in music. This realization, aided and abetted by the courageous and thoughtful music teacher or supervisor on the spot, is resulting in a re-evaluation of the school music program. Already many school administrators realize that any explora-

tion of great instrumental music requires the strings, and that the school music program without strings and orchestra is as unbalanced as would be an English department, for example, which offered grammar and composition in its curriculum but no course in literature. It is through the strings, and the various combinations of strings and strings with winds and the orchestra, that the student comes into contact with great instrumental music of all periods.

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Finally, it should be pointed out that the number of clinics, forums, and festivals emphasizing strings is in itself evidence of an improving string situation. Mutual problems pertaining to our various fields are now being discussed and investigated in open forum, and this healthy situation is a significant factor in the revitalizing of strings.

While private study with a qualified teacher is eventually the more desirable procedure for the individual student, the earlier stages of

string study are actually more efficiently taught, and students can advance more rapidly, through the class approach. This is especially true in the case of school-age children, provided, of course, that the teacher is well-equipped personally and trained in proper class teaching techniques. Some of the advantages of the string class situation are:

1. More frequent meetings with the teacher (unless one is fortunate enough to be able to arrange several private lessons a week instead of the

usual one lesson a week—a rare situation); hence, much more supervision by the teacher. Actually, a good deal of the class work amounts to supervised practicing, and little or no home practice is advisable for the first six or eight weeks—at least not until the pupils have established basic habits of correct playing.

2. Social values of string class work. The teamwork of the group, each member individually responsible for an assigned part, all working toward the whole performance is a valuable social asset. Each member of the class is at the same level of advancement and hence there is a feeling of kinship within the group. At the same time there can be a degree of competition within the group which is a good incentive for progress.

3. Economical use of teacher time. The string class corresponds to the regular school class and hence is preferred by school administrators.

The teaching of strings in separate classes (in violin—with viola included, of course—cello, and bass) is generally preferable to the mixed string class. If it is necessary to have the mixed string class, one or two separate classes per week as sectional rehearsals, so to speak, are suggested. While it is true that there are basic principles of string playing which are identical for all the stringed instruments, there are important differences in the teaching of each group of instruments, particularly with regard to the left-hand technique. There are significant differences, especially between violin and cello, in the playing position of the instrument, the position and manipulations of the left hand, the bow grip, and the finger patterns which necessitate separate attention a good deal of the class time on the part of the teacher. Too often the teacher, being perhaps a "specialist" on one or the other instrument, "favors" that group in his class, unconsciously perhaps, and hence the other instrumental groups receive insufficient attention and fall into bad playing habits. On the other hand, if the class teacher tries to do the job right and give each instrument the necessary instruction, he finds himself in the predicament of explaining and giving instruction

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to one group while the others in the class have to sit and wait. True, one can attempt to devise other activities for the rest of the class, but these generally take more time to set in motion than they are really worth, or else these may even interrupt the teacher's own instruction to that group of the class under immediate consideration.

The best and most efficient arrangement is, in my opinion, to have separate instruction provided for the first part of the year, and then arrange to bring all the strings together once or twice a week, with the rest of the time for separate classes. The mixed string meetings would be used for ensemble playing, supervised rehearsing of mutual technical projects, and so forth. After a good start has been made, this early ensemble playing as a supplement to the regular class work is an important part of the training and a satisfying musical experience for the students, and should by all means be provided for. Several of the string class methods provide good material for this early ensemble playing, and string orchestra material is available at the primary level.

Another opinion regarding string teaching that is receiving serious attention is that the first teaching should be by rote, and that note reading should be avoided at first so that the beginning students may watch their playing and their instruments. This approach, which is becoming increasingly popular, is simply based on the very sound principle of "first things first"—concentrating on but one problem at a time. Thus the problems of holding the instrument, the left-hand placement and functions, the bow grip, drawing the bow, and note reading are taken up separately at first. Moreover, the choice of material and the organization and the pace of the teaching should be based on the particular teaching situation—that is, age of the pupils, ability level of the pupil or group, whether the teaching is to be class or individual instruction, and, if class, whether a mixed or a homogeneous class. One simply cannot teach an eight-year-old student as one would an eighteen-year-old student, nor a class as one would a private lesson.

Finally, in the selection and teaching of study material emphasis should be placed on the melodic approach to the teaching. The student should be provided with satisfying musical experiences right from the start. After all, the pupil's criterion for evaluation of the string program is his or her present enjoyment of the study. It is absolutely pointless, discouraging to the student, and poor teaching to put every student through the same "school" of etudes and studies. This outdated proced-

ure adhered to in a time of new teaching approaches in other fields of music education was as much a cause of the demise of strings as any other one factor. It has been my own experience that only a relatively small percentage of the average students participating in a typical school string program are sufficiently talented or interested in one way or another to benefit from this specialized type of study. Even the studio teacher in many cases needs to adjust his teaching of the private student

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more satisfactorily to the age and ability of the individual pupil. A careful, well-considered choice of teaching material based on the melodic approach can provide a reasonable, if not altogether complete, technical foundation for the average string student. The strictly technical training which is given any young student should be carefully apportioned and organized as to difficulty, musical interest, and rate of advancement for the individual student or class situation.

## LEWIS

(Continued from page 15)

the Dallas Symphony. A new publication being printed for Texas string teachers, under the auspices of the Texas ASTA, is eagerly awaited this spring. The state ASTA unit has held meetings in conjunction with the conventions of the State Teachers Association and the Texas Music Educators Association.

The Iowa ASTA unit is cooperating in sponsoring a high-school

string workshop on May 14 at Iowa State Teachers College under the leadership of Frank Hill. Their program will include recitals, lectures, and performance of a massed-string orchestra. Otto Jelinek, president of the Iowa ASTA unit, is carrying the plans of his group to the unorganized element of private teachers in his state, for the mutual values that accrue from working together.

Illinois has been fortunate in the strong string program projected from their State University. Louis Potter and Paul Rolland have initiated annual stringed instrument conventions that have been outstanding in accomplishment. For several years the Illinois String Planning Conference was the sponsoring organization. Last year the Conference was dissolved into the Illinois state unit of ASTA and the MENC committee on string instruction. This powerful combination promises even greater efficiency and benefits for the string teachers of Illinois.

Of special service to string teachers has been *String News*, a publication edited by Paul Rolland. It is

informative and educational in that it reports local programs, gives statistics on string enrollment, presents articles explaining individual teaching approaches and procedures, and offers detailed graded string material for elementary and advanced levels.

No longer need a teacher of strings work in isolation, repeating concerts and repertoire learned in another generation. Advances have been made in the science of teaching and learning. The publication features of ASTA make possible the wide circulation of information.

This transformation in string interest is coming from many sources. The initial drive is from outstanding string educators. Emphasis has been placed upon the importance of high school string programs in developing a higher level of string education and activity for the whole country. Fortunately, many school administrators are recognizing the value of string programs. Some state departments of education are taking more leadership in sponsoring state orchestra programs and festivals. The demand for string players is greater

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than ever before because of the increased interest in symphony orchestras. Even hillbilly bands have done their share in stimulating string awareness. A number of college music departments have invited string teachers in their areas to meet with their staff members and students. In some cases, college string teachers are conducting string clinics in high schools. The Music Educators National Conference takes every opportunity to lend its services to the cause of better string teaching.

The need for the best string teaching possible is a challenge before us. Eager to help us meet it is the American String Teachers Association, an effective clearing house for the dissemination of string teaching methods and other aids to better teaching. Its conferences are inspirational not only for the knowledge imparted, but also because of the earnestness of its members. The sincerity and energy of American string teachers are apparent in the rapid progress being made toward achievements scarcely dreamed of in the past.

teaching stringed instruments. Making string accomplishment a successful group experience is the greatest of them all. The development of this technique now provides us with an attractive and effective program for children—provided, of course, that we use it. Coupled with a good public relations program, mass initiation into the fun of playing a stringed instrument can provide our culture with the instrumental balance we need.

But that's easier said than done. The opposition to group instruction, which is not a substitute but a stimulus for private study, lies in the eternal resistance to change. The opponents, which include many private teachers, can be divided into two groups—the apathetic majority and the militant minority. The phlegmatic group is content to go along day after day in gloomy contemplation of the lack of students, catering to a diminishing flock.

Members of this same group join the militant minority when confronted with the suggestion that the employment of group methods would help matters. It can't work and won't work, they say, because of the special difficulties involved in teaching the violin. I am not saying that the difficulties aren't real, nor that mass methods will educate embryonic violinists to the level of professional musicians. But I am saying that stimulation of the masses to actual participation in the fun of playing a violin, viola, cello, or bass through the employment of whatever means we can devise is the only answer to our problem. And when I speak of group instruction, I mean successful group instruction. For to attempt and fail with a group of hopeful violinists is to confirm further the opinion we're fighting.

Space doesn't permit me to mention the many successful attempts in group teaching, but I should like to point to a specific example, such as the work of Gilbert Waller at the University of Illinois, to substanti-



## When Music Was in the Hand

Faced with the task of teaching his choir boys the Gregorian chant, Guido d'Arezzo, an ingenious monk who lived in the 11th century, devised a scheme in which the human hand could act as an effective aid to memorizing the melodic line.

While his choir was learning a then well-known hymn to St. John the Baptist, Guido noticed that the tones sung on the initial syllables of the first six lines of the hymn correlated exactly with the six ascending tones of the hexachord that he used as the basis for his scale system.

When Guido combined this set of Latin hymn syllables and the sounds to which they corresponded he utilized a basic pattern which has per-

sisted to this day—ut (later changed to do), re, mi, fa, sol, la.

Assigning his nomenclature to the joints of the fingers of the left hand, Guido had the choir boys sing the notes designated by those parts of the hand to which he pointed. It was this application of his scheme that became known as the "Guidonian Hand".

Through the years Guido's "hand" gained more and more importance until it became the symbol of complete mastery of the medieval hexachord system. Changes in the basic concept which Guido had set forth were long resisted, and even as late as the 16th century strong objections were raised against chromaticism because it was not contained "in the hand".

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ate my statements. Seeing the need, he has successfully developed a tutorial program capable of turning out students well-grounded in the fundamentals of string playing and capable of employing the instrument as a tool for enjoyment. Moreover, the learning process is brisk, interesting, and enjoyable.

Perhaps a harder nut to crack is the instrument problem itself. No basis for judgment exists by which the public can estimate the value of stringed instruments. No well-ad-

vertised brands pace the field as in the case of brass instruments, and the public believes that a good violin is priced far beyond what a beginner should pay, or would pay if he were buying a horn. That isn't necessarily so. The brass industry has been selling tangible values, whereas the violin market, in particular, has been trading in ancient dates and far-off places. Informing the public that satisfactory stringed instruments for the beginner can be had for prices easily competitive

with the wind group is one of the teacher's responsibilities. Further than that, it is the teacher's responsibility to maintain supervision over the instruments in his students' hands, remedying the defects which will develop through use, and correcting faults which hinder progress. Cooperation between maker, distributor, and teacher is the best solution to the problem of providing the beginner with a good stringed instrument.

The American Music Conference is putting its resources to work in this cooperative effort to revitalize the string movement. As a non-profit educational organization whose sole interest is to bring more music to more Americans, the American Music Conference is enthusiastically supporting this program and stands ready to offer assistance.

What can we do as individuals to stimulate the string program, pending the formation of a tightly knit organization and local industry? We can first rid ourselves of the myth of difficulty, which is as much a part of our musical heritage as the scales we learned. Reflect for a moment on your attitude toward the violin (maybe you haven't done so before), and see if you aren't confirming the myth of difficulty in your general discussions of the problem. I, for one, had to be shown! Make yourself an ardent debunker, even though you may feel that you are losing some prestige in the process. Then make every effort to acquaint yourself with the successful attempts at group instruction in order that you may be a better agent for the advancement of the cause, and eventually make a contribution of your own in the field of technical accomplishment. Finally, make every effort to assure for the students of your community their privilege of obtaining properly constructed and repaired instruments. You can do this merely by talking to the dealer, who in many cases is not a string man at all, and informing him of such necessary standards as properly shaped bridges, well-fitted pegs, a bow strung correctly and bent to the proper side. This done, we shall have contributed to the people by opening another avenue for the enjoyment of life.



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(Continued from page 10)

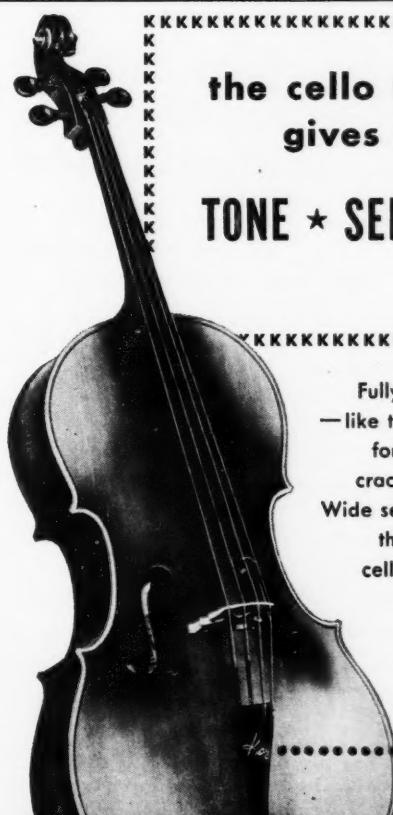
question but that the glamor and eye-appeal of the band have attracted many thousands of school children. As musicians, we can but hope that now most of the attention will be directed towards a better type of band music for concert use and that more original works for band will replace the orchestral transcriptions that have largely been the band fare whenever concert bands perform. The optimistic note I would sound is that in the search for a stronger music program, rather than a search for more "vaudeville," instrumental directors will seek through the use of the orchestra as well the means to secure a music program which can be achieved independent of the athletic program. Today we find more band directors encouraging the orchestral program, not only for the reasons given, but also because more instrumental majors in our colleges are being required to register for string class work.

It has been heartening to talk with various publishers' representatives and those of the musical supply companies, and to be made aware of their sincere attempts to promote the string field and orchestral music. As long as orchestral men will continue to drive hard and produce fine results, enthusiasm for the orchestra will not die. The publishers and their commercial campaigns are of real aid in the promotion of string teaching. By enlisting their further support we can hope that their efforts as well as our own may continue to increase in the interest of string promotion.

Regarding the objection that there is a lack of professional opportunity for string players, one must admit that the end of the theater orchestra did great harm to the professional string player. Also the concentration of radio employment in the large centers because of the "chains" has cut into employment of many qualified performers. However, we offer as a partial substitute the many symphony orchestras that are going concerns. Cities that in the best days of theater and local radio supported only a few string players now attempt the customary complement of strings of symphonic

density. The list is long and growing yearly. Surprisingly enough, their seasons are extended and they have become a definite part of a forward-looking culture. Symphonies supported by the various states and calling themselves by their state name are in the ascendancy. The talented high school players that have been developed by our schools and by private teachers in America are on the personnel lists of every major symphony. Many of us can name the individuals in these orchestras now.

that are the products of our educational system. It is a fact to be noted and proudly underlined that the orchestral development in America is greater than in any other country in the world. In a recent edition of the Musician's Union magazine 192 organized chamber music groups in America, largely involving the string family, were recorded. There are many hundreds of fine amateur groups as well that perform throughout the land. The addition of the chamber group "in residence" at



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#### BEGARRING THE COVER

The boy on the cover of this issue is, of course, the same one who appeared on the March-April, 1945 issue. We are using him again because so many of our readers complimented us on our selection that we associate him with material on strings.

some of our colleges and universities is another indication of the growing appreciation for fine string playing.

One of the greatest needs has been that for a String Teachers' Association. The lack of such an organization that could collectively promote string playing and teaching has indeed been a drawback. The writer hopes that the present organization—the American String Teachers Association—will encourage all phases of string activities and he optimistically offers the organization and its mem-

bership the opinion that this organization will be the answer to the co-operative effort that has been wanting. There is every reason to believe that the ASTA will do for string promotion what the other organizations have been able to achieve in other musical fields.

A frequent "reason" given for retarded string interest is the poor quality of instrument and poorer bows that are used in the schools. A few of the good instrument dealers have assured me that standard-

ization is under way and that in the near future such instruments and bows, reasonably priced, with steel strings (all adjustable at the tail-piece) of good quality and of exact specifications will be offered. It is to be hoped that a violin outfit for seventy-five or a hundred dollars will be purchasable that can be recommended without misgiving. I believe it can be done, especially if the string teachers demand it.

Then there is the factor that has so often been left an unanswered challenge—the lack of adequate teaching programs in colleges and universities that will prepare more and better qualified string teachers. It is gratifying to note that a number of schools now require one year and more of string class work for the teaching degree. It is in the belief that there can be improvements made in the string class method that the writer endorses this approach to the problem of supply of string teachers. If the fundamentals for the string family are properly learned by students who are not specialists in strings, good results can be achieved. The select circle of string specialists is being widened to include teachers who are at least able to encourage and direct string programs in many schools that cannot (or will not) engage an instrumental teacher whose specialty is in the string family. This partial solution which is being worked out in Nebraska, and I am sure in other states as well, is at least worthy of encouragement. Again the optimistic view would be to encourage it at the risk of forsaking temporarily some cherished notions regarding the teaching of the stringed instruments.

To help in this work of the non-string specialist, we are now introducing at the University of Nebraska the visual aids by means of the filmstrip. We have completed a filmstrip devoted to the violin which gives, pictorially, the elements of correct playing position and the use of both hands in the teaching of the violin. Each filmstrip is devoted to one instrument in the string, wind, brass, and percussion families. A syllabus accompanies each filmstrip. This seems particularly feasible since about four hundred filmstrip projectors are owned and used in the Nebraska schools at present. Soon,

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Are you teaching?

we feel, the audio aids will further assist in string teaching. Numerous methods, many of real value, are already published which can serve the teacher insofar as material is concerned. Further, a string class method from the unison approach is being designed in our string department so that string classes can follow the patterns found in woodwind and brass methods already in existence.

Finally we reach the factor of the general neglect of the entire teaching profession. National attention has already been directed to the inadequate salaries and unsatisfactory working conditions for teachers in America. Improvement, although slight, is evident. The average salary increase this past year in Nebraska was \$200 per year for each teacher in the state, according to a survey published by the Nebraska State Education Association.

Despite the Harvard Report, music is increasingly becoming a definite part of the curriculum. A sentence from the Harvard Report gives us heart, "A training in the musical skills is hardly within the province of general education, but participation in choral singing or in orchestral performance can be of the greatest value for large numbers of students."

It has been my intent to sound an optimistic note. I have attempted to restate the reasons that are voiced in discussions regarding the difficulties in effecting an adequate string situation in America. Optimism is necessary, but certainly a real effort nationally must continue to be the prescription for activity in string playing.

### CADEK

(Continued from page 7)

tone. But that does not mean that we could have quarter-tone music. For artistic purposes the least is not enough. It is but a warning of what to avoid. It therefore seems that the half-step is the smallest safety margin for musical purposes, and that our chromatic scale of twelve half-steps is the normal culmination of a natural musical evolution."

Turning to the third point, it seems almost universally agreed that, played simultaneously, the intervals

rank as follows in order of consonance: first, Unison and Octave; then Fifth; then Fourth; major and minor Thirds and Sixths come next, with varying opinions as to their order; and the remaining intervals are recognized as dissonances. Helmholtz [11], the champion of just intonation, was greatly concerned over the purity of Thirds and Sixths, which must be slightly exaggerated in equal temperament, more so in Pythagorean. But Schoen [20] quotes Stumpf as saying, "very small devia-

tions of vibration frequencies from the simple ratios of the intervals do not cause a noticeable change in the degree of fusion. But if the deviation is increased, its fusion becomes that of its neighboring interval, without passing through any intermediate degrees of fusion."

An important element in violin intonation is the fourth item, the vibrato. Probably most of my readers are familiar with the analytical work in this field by Cheslock, Reger [18, 19], Small [24], and others.

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Briefly, all violin artists of today employ pitch vibrato on practically all stopped notes of sufficient duration to permit its execution. The average number of vibrations, similar to the voice, is seven per second. The average pitch extent is about one quarter Tone, while that of the voice is about one Semitone. The perceived pitch is apparently midway between the extremes of the vibrato cycle or wave, according to four investigators (Metfessel, Tiffin, H. Seashore, and Hires) named by Small [24].

In view of the fact that violin students are so frequently urged to imitate artistic singing, I believe that H. Seashore's [22] conclusions after analysis of ten songs performed by concert artists will prove interesting: "In only about 20 per cent of the tones is the mean-pitch entirely coincident with the correct pitch level (equal temperament) within 0.1 of a tonal step. No modification of the scale is observed; the deviations are grosser and more unsystematized than those which are discussed in the literature concerning modification of the tempered scale in favor of just intonation. Though the deviations often are well above the threshold of discrimination for steady simple tones, they frequently are unperceived by singer and listener. Two psychological principles are operating; by habit we force tonal experience into our conventional scale, thus counteracting mentally the pull of the physical stimulus away from exact pitch and interval; also in the singing situation words, vision, social activity, memory, imagination, and many other factors are concomitants of tone proper. In the light of these facts, it seems probable that the importance of attainment of true pitch or interval as goals of instruction is overestimated, that the musical ear is surprisingly tolerant." This is good news, but the string artist can never accept this tolerance as a point of departure.

Finally, taking up direct investigation of the pitch used by violinists, Small [24] has made experiments which show that ". . . the violinist deviates over 60 per cent of the time from the tempered scale notes, with deviations of  $1/20$  Tone or greater. The average deviation is about  $1/10$  Tone. The deviations are preponderantly in the direction of sharpening."

He states further, "The violinist, like the vocalist, uses the composer's pitch indices simply as relative reference levels about which he varies almost continuously. His melody is not a succession of static pitches; rather it is a succession of continuously varying pitches integrated around a rather definite level. Not only is the pitch in an almost constant state of well-regulated flux about a level, but the level itself is very frequently not precisely the one indicated in the score."

The earliest investigators, Cornu and Mercadier [see 11], found in 1871 that "in solo performances a continual variety of intonation was observed; the same pitch was seldom repeated, and even the Octave and the Fifth were sometimes sharpened or flattened. So far as any regularity could be traced, the intervals aimed at appeared to be those known as Pythagorean." They reported, however, that in two-part harmony, the players with whom they experimented invariably produced the intervals of just intonation.

A highly significant study by Greene [9], published in 1936, analyzed the performance of six professional violinists in three selections. The findings indicated that these six violinists played in neither the just nor the equally tempered scale, and that while individual players showed slightly different patterns of intonation, as a group they tended to approximate the intervals of the Pythagorean scale. It should be noted, however, that this experiment contained no intervals greater in extent than a perfect Fourth, and no double-stops or two-part harmony.

### Little Relation

The above investigations have shown that the absolute pitch of a tone (frequency) has little relation to artistic effect or satisfaction; that the ear, while unable to recognize absolute pitch, easily distinguishes between various degrees of consonance and dissonance through the blending or clash of the vibrations (frequently called "beats"); that slight variations in individual intervals do not change their special quality; that vibrato covers a greater extent ( $1/4$  Tone) than the variations of pitch between any scale systems;

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and that violinists tend to play in the Pythagorean scale in melodic successions.

Turning now to writers who have approached the subject of intonation from a practical standpoint, it is surprising to find how limited and contradictory the opinions are. In 1922 Sevcik [23] published his *School of Intonation on an Harmonic Basis*. In the introduction he makes the following statement: "From the necessity of tuning the violin in perfect Fifths has arisen the exigency that the individual tones of a scale must be produced differently, according as any specific tone forms an interval with an upper or a lower open string. Those tones forming intervals with an upper open string must be produced somewhat higher than those forming intervals with a lower open string."

Sevcik then gives examples and recommends two finger positions—the high, tempered finger position, which should be employed in all keys with sharps and in those with flats where the open strings can be utilized (F, B-flat, E-flat), and the low, normal finger position, which should be employed in the remaining keys. He concludes by saying, "From the preceding it will be seen that pure intonation on the violin is a complicated process, largely dependent upon tempering the individual intervals, and that it cannot be learned mechanically. On the contrary, perfect intonation is a matter of the intellect and the ear." Sevcik then gives numerous exercises for beginners, who are supposed to make just intervals with the upper and lower strings.

To my knowledge this comprehensive attempt to promote the playing of just intervals never found favor, and it is not used at all today. I ascribe this to the fact that a constantly shifting pitch in relation to the open string, while admitting of just intervals, is possible only in a slow tempo and when one violin is playing alone. Such a shifting pitch will be noticeable when playing with an instrument of fixed pitch such as the piano, and in a string quartet it would call for constant adjustments on the part of all instruments. Finally, in rapid passages such adjustments become impossible.

Very interesting are the remarks

of Carl Flesch [7] on purity of intonation. He says, "According to acoustic law, each tone has an exactly defined number of vibrations. When these are produced in the quantity prescribed, we feel and describe the resultant tone as being true or 'in tune,' and in the contrary case as being false or 'out of tune.'" This is quite contrary to the opinion of scientific investigators I have quoted, who contend that we do not judge a tone by the number of its vibrations, but by its relation to an immediately preceding or simultaneous tone. Flesch goes on to state that "In the physical sense, 'playing in tune' is an impossibility. What we call 'playing in tune' is no more than an extremely rapid, skillfully carried out improvement of the originally inexact located tonal pitch." When we play out of tune, he says, it shows an auditory, not a manual, deficiency. "Hence, everything depends on making our sense of hearing so acute that an impure tone makes the most disagreeable impression on us and in this way automatically brings with it a corrective movement."

Before presenting my own conclusions on the subject I wish to make the point that in discussing string intonation, we must take the factor of duration into consideration. In slow playing, with a constant vibrato of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  Tone in extent, it is possible to approximate any system of intonation. As with artistic singing, inflection of pitch is a part of the violinist's technique of expression. He may at one time prefer the smooth Thirds of the just scale; at another the pull of a resolution or modulation may bring him to exceed even the Pythagorean exaggerations.

A large proportion of our playing, however, is concerned with notes at a speed which makes manual dexterity the most important factor. The ear can only function as a guide for the general pitch level, and it is important to have a definite and dependable technical approach. Here the fundamental mechanics of the instrument must be given first consideration. Since we have established that any form of intonation involves some tempering, the type which is best fitted to the instrument should inevitably give the best tonal and technical results.

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I maintain, therefore, that the violin is an instrument that is best served by the Pythagorean system of intervals as a point of departure. This conclusion was reached from a purely practical standpoint, as a result of years of experience as a student, teacher, and performer. Naturally, I was gratified to find that objective analyses corroborated my experience, indicating that violinists perform in Pythagorean intervals.

My conclusion is supported by the following reasoning:

1. Being tuned in perfect Fifths, the violin is naturally adapted to the Pythagorean system, which is based on perfect Fifths.

2. The four open strings are fixed notes that serve as a basis for the system. All perfect intervals, being the most sensitive, should remain perfect; the open strings will then vibrate in sympathy with their Octaves and Fifths, thereby increasing the resonance of the instrument.

3. Thirds and Sixths, being less consonant, may be tempered without serious offense to the ear. Major Thirds and Sixths should be enlarged, Minor Thirds and Sixths contracted. The major Seventh is higher than in equal temperament, thus accentuating leading-tone tendencies. The minor Seventh is lower, and thus in modulation approaches the tone of resolution.

4. This tempering permits a single finger placement for each note in relation to both upper and lower open strings, instead of two, as advocated by Sevcik [28]. Regular finger patterns are maintained, and assurance of finger placement is thereby gained.

5. Sharps become higher and flats lower by the process of successive perfect Fifths. Every sharp is higher than its corresponding flat by the Comma of Pythagoras. So G-flat is lower than F-sharp, as Flesch [7] would like to have it.

6. Sharp keys have a progressively increasing number of high notes, flat keys a progressively increasing number of low notes, thereby differentiating the tone color of keys. Enharmonic changes in the system are actual pitch changes.

I believe that most well-trained violinists utilize the Pythagorean system, even though they may not be aware of it, since it is logically

suited to stringed instruments tuned in perfect Fifths. I have found that most students who come to me try to play just intervals, constantly adjusting their fingers to an open string, and having no assurance of finger placement. This condition is improved when they learn to listen for the exaggerated Thirds and Sixths of the Pythagorean system. The training in close half-steps which this system promotes is especially valuable, since one of the fundamental difficulties of violin technique is the contraction of the hand necessary to play in the higher positions.

My object in this discussion has not been to announce a startling discovery, as did a writer in the *Etude* some years ago, who built a theory of temperament on the resonance factor of the open strings and called it "Paganini's Secret," but to try to shed some light on the problems of intonation which confront the serious student of stringed instruments.

I have accepted a place on the research commission of ASTA with the subject of intonation as my special field. This summary represents my own investigation and thought on the subject thus far, without consultation with any other member of the commission. I welcome a discussion of the data I have presented, as well as any information regarding experimentation which has not been available to me or has escaped my attention. Specifically, I should like to find more authoritative comments on intonation, as well as records of experiments such as the following:

1. Interval discrimination for complex tones of stringed instruments. (Most experiments have been made with simple tones.)

2. Analysis of double-stops as played by concert artists.

3. The relative resonance of a violin played in just, equal temperament, and Pythagorean double-stops.

4. Measurement of the duration of a note necessary to effect a pitch change.

I am convinced that this is a field well worth further investigation. Although many of you may feel an artist's reluctance to examine the phenomenon of pitch, which, especially on the stringed instrument, is such an elusive and personal element

of the technique of expression, the setting of definite goals in intonation, if such is possible, should be of great value to teacher and student.

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